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Viewing cable 08SANJOSE895, GOCR: VENEZUELANS FACILITATING ARAB TRAVEL WITH

If you are new to these pages, please read an introduction on the [structure of a cable](#) as well as how to [discuss them](#) with others. See also the [FAQs](#)

Understanding cables

Every cable message consists of three parts:

- The top box shows each cables unique reference number, when and by whom it originally was sent, and what its initial classification was.
- The middle box contains the header information that is associated with the cable. It includes information about the receiver(s) as well as a general subject.
- The bottom box presents the body of the cable. The opening can contain a more specific subject, references to other cables ([browse by origin](#) to find them) or additional comment. This is followed by the main contents of the cable: a summary, a collection of specific topics and a comment section.

To understand the justification used for the classification of each cable, please use this [WikiSource](#) article as reference.

Discussing cables

If you find meaningful or important information in a cable, please link directly to its unique reference number. Linking to a specific paragraph in the body of a cable is also possible by copying the appropriate link (to be found at the paragraph symbol). Please mark messages for social networking services like Twitter with the hash tags **#cablegate** and a hash containing the reference ID e.g. **#08SANJOSE895**.

Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
08SANJOSE895	2008-11-14 22:21	2011-08-30 01:44	CONFIDENTIAL	Embassy San Jose

Appears in these articles:

<http://www.nacion.com/2011-03-06/Investigacion/NotasDestacadas/Investigacion2702320.aspx>
<http://www.nacion.com/2011-03-06/Investigacion/NotasSecundarias/Investigacion2702325.aspx>
<http://www.nacion.com/2011-03-06/Investigacion/NotaPrincipal/Investigacion2702324.aspx>
<http://www.nacion.com/2011-03-06/Investigacion/NotasSecundarias/Investigacion2702326.aspx>
<http://www.nacion.com/2011-03-06/Investigacion/NotasSecundarias/Investigacion2702327.aspx>

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PP RUEHWEB

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ZNY CCCCC ZZH
P 142221Z NOV 08
FM AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0273
INFO RUEHZA/WHA CENTRAL AMERICAN COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS PRIORITY 1138
RHMFSS/US CUSTOMS AND BORDER PROTECTION WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAN JOSE 000895

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR WHA/CEN, WHA/AND, WHA/PPC, NEA AND CA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/20/2008

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SUBJECT: GOCR: VENEZUELANS FACILITATING ARAB TRAVEL WITH

BRV PASSPORTS

REF: SAN JOSE 882 (NOTAL)

Classified By: DCM Peter M. Brennan for reason 1.4(d).

¶11. (C) SUMMARY: Mario Zamora, head of the GOCR General Directorate of Immigration (DGI, acronym in Spanish), told us on October 30 that Costa Rica had seen a small (undefined) number of non-Venezuelan-born Arabs traveling with real Venezuelan passports, using Arab names. According to Zamora, Venezuela is issuing "courtesy" passports to persons affiliated with OPEC offices in Caracas. Zamora recognized that this practice could mask or facilitate terrorist travel to the U.S. END SUMMARY.

¶12. (C) Zamora told us that the DGI became aware of Venezuela using passports as a political tool from Venezuelan refugees seeking asylum in Costa Rica. Those who oppose Chavez have trouble getting passports, which allows the BRV to limit travel of the opposition. However, as part of the courtesies that the Chavez government extends to OPEC members, the BRV issues Venezuelan passports to personnel in the OPEC offices in Caracas to help facilitate their travel in Latin America. The idea is that a Venezuelan passport will not be scrutinized as closely as, for example, an Iraqi passport, according to Zamora.

¶13. (C) At this point, Zamora has not detected indications of terrorist movement. However, he did not discount that the "terror angle" was possible.

¶14. (C) COMMENT: We are passing along the information that Zamora provided regarding Venezuelan passports, as well as reftel on Zamora's readout on the fallout of Ecuador dropping its tourist visa requirements, as anecdotal evidence of potential areas of security concern for the U.S. We would appreciate knowing whether Embassy Caracas can confirm this use of BRV passports, and whether the BRV is extending this "courtesy" to legitimate OPEC members or whether the government is giving out passports more liberally. Zamora is a credible and serious interlocutor on all immigration-related security issues. If there is something to this BRV passport gambit, we want to work with him to help stop it. END COMMENT.

CIANCHETTE